

Message Text

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FOL KABUL 2837 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BELGRADE CAIRO
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USUN CINCPAC APR 15, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 2837

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PEPR, PORG (ANMCC), AF, SA, KU, EG, CU

SUBJECT: A VIGOROUS AND SATISFIED DAOUD RETURNS FROM HIS SECOND
MIDDLE EAST TOUR

REF: A. KUWAIT 2167; B. CAIRO 10459; C. JIDDA 2691

1. SUMMARY: EXUDING APPARENT GOOD HEALTH, AFGHANISTAN'S
PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAOUD HAS RETURNED FROM A SERIES OF STATE
VISITS TO SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, AND EGYPT. HIS OIL-RICH
CORELIGIONISTS ON THE PERSIAN GULF HAVE PROMISED TO LOOK INTO
FURTHER ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR AFGHANISTAN AND THE EGYPTIANS
DISCUSSED WITH DAOUD COORDINATED STRATEGIES FOR THE UPCOMING
(MAY 6-10) MEETING OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT COORDINATING
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COMMITTEE (NAMCC) AST KABUL. END OF SUMMARY.

2. ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 9, PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAOUD
RETURNED FROM HIS SECOND MAJOR TOUR OF THE YEAR, WHICH INCLUDED
STATE VISITS TO SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, AND EGYPT. (IN FEBRUARY AND
MARCH, DAOUD HAD VISITED YUGOSLAVIA, LIBYA, TURKEY -- AN
"UNOFFICIAL REST STOP" WHERE MUCH BILATERAL BUSINESS WAS PROBABLY

TRANSACTIONED, INDIA, AND PAKISTAN.) DAOUD FOUND TIME ON HIS RETURN TRIP TO ENGAGE BRIEFLY IN DOMESTIC POLITICKING ACTIVITIES AT KANDAHAR, THE MAIN URBAN CENTER FOR THE SOUTHERN PUSHTUNS OF AFGHANISTAN. THE PRESIDENT FOLLOWED THE SAME OPEN "MEET-THE PEOPLE" STYLE THAT HE LAUNCHED SO SUCCESSFULLY AMONG THE EASTERN PUSHTUNS AFTER HIS RETURN FROM PAKISTAN IN MARCH.

3. ABDUL AHAD NASSER-ZIAYEE, DIRECTOR OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S INFORMATION DIVISION -- AND A MEMBER OF THE DAOUD PARTY, TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER ON APRIL 11 THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS "HIGHLY SATISFIED" WITH THE RESULTS OF HIS TRIP. NASSER-ZIAYEE REPORTED THAT DAOUD WAS ESPECIALLY GRATIFIED BY THE EXCEPTIONALLY WARM RECEPTION HE HAD RECEIVED IN EGYPT. ASKED HOW DAOUD HAD STOOD UP TO THE STRAIN OF THE TRIP, NASSER-ZIAYEE REPLIED THAT THE PRESIDENT RETURNED "STRONG, HEALTHY, AND VIGOROUS." (COMMENT: DAOUD'S ACTIVE SCHEDULE AT KANDAHAR MIGHT ALSO HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE PUBLICITY HIS STAMINA. END OF COMMENT)

4. DURING A SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH MOHAMMAD SEDDIQ SALJOOQI, DIRECTOR OF THE SECOND POLITICAL DIVISION (MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA) -- AND ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE TRAVELLING PARTY, THE EMBASSY OFFICER WAS TOLD THAT THE DAOUD TRIP HAD PRODDUCED SOME SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS. ACCORDING TO SALJOOQI, THE SAUDIS AND THE KUWAITIS BOTH AGREED TO SEND ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS TO AFGHANISTAN TO INVESTIGATE WAYS IN WHICH THEIR AID PROGRAMS HERE COULD BE IMPROVED AND INCREASED (WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT

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REFTEL A REPORTS THAT NO SUCH MEASURE IS PLANNED BY THE KUWAITI GOVERNMENT). SALJOOQI SUGGESTED THAT AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE SHOULD BE APPLIED TO ENCOURAGE THESE OIL-WEALTHY MUSLIM STATES TO FOLLOW UP THESE PROMISES WITH CONCRETE AID ACTIVITY. SALJOOQI, WHO IS AMONG THOSE AFGHAN OFFICIALS WHO PROFESS CONCERN OVER THE LARGE SOVIET ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND MILITARY SUPPLY-AND-TRAINING STAKE IN THIS COUNTRY, WOULD LIKE TO SEE AFGHANISTAN'S RICH CORELIGIONISTS INCREASE THEIR SHARE OF THE AID ACTIVITY HERE, THEREBY DISPLACING THE SOVIETS IN CERTAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS.

5. SALJOBI WAS MORE GUARDED IN DISCUSSING THE POLITICAL TALKS AT CAIRO, OBSERVING THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT EXCHANGE OCCURRED DURING A TWO-AND-A-HALF HOUR SESSION WHEN SADAT AND DAOUD WERE "HERMETICALLY SEALED OFF TOGETHER." HE ACKNOWLED, HOWEVER, THAT KABUL'S FORTHCOMING NAMCC MEETING WAS THE MAIN TOPIC COVERED. SALJOOQI ALSO REVEALED THAT THE CUBAN ISSUE WAS DISCUSSED EXTENSIVELY AT CAIOR, AS IT HAD BEEN IN FEBRUARY AT BELGRADE (WHERE, ACCORDING TO SALJOOQI, THE YUGOSLAVS HAD TOLD THE AFGHANS THAT THE CUBANS ARE TODAY THE "LEAST NON-ALIGNED OF ALL NATIONS.").

6. REFERRING TO THE VARIOUS JOINT COMMUNIQUE'S GENERATED

DURING THE TOUR, SALJOOQI NOTED THAT DAOUD HAS TRIED TO STRESS AT ALL HIS STOPS IN THE MIDDLE EAST THE NEED FOR ARAB UNITY AND SOLIDARITY. HE ALSO CALLED ATTENTION TO THE MENTION OF THE JERUSALEM ISSUE, "A TOUGH NUT, WHICH IS COMPLETELY IGNORED BY THE WESTERN PRESS." SALJOOQI REPORTED THAT THE ARABS WERE GRATIFIED THAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT WAS NOW ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPORTANCE OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. WHEN DISCUSSING THE DISPLACEMENT OF THE INDIGENOUS ARABS FROM PALESTINE BY THE POST-WORLD II INFLEX OF JEWS, SALJOOQI OBSERVED WRYLY THAT THE ISRAELIS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MORE SUCCESSFUL AT PROMOTING THEIR 2,000-YEAR-OLD REAL ESTATE CLAIM THAN THE AFGHANS HAVE BEEN WITH THEIR "FRESHER" 100 YEAR-OLD CLAIM FOR LOST PUSHTUN LANDS BEYOND THE DURAND LINE.

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7. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY AGREES WITH SALJOOQI THAT INCREASED MUSLIM AID HERE COULD BE BENEFICIAL IN REDUCING AFGHANISTAN'S DEPENDENCE UPON COMMUNIST SOURCES. SUCH ASSISTANCE WOULD ALSO ASSIST IN PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRONGER REGIONAL TIES BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND THE PERSIAN GULF STATES, WHICH IS ONE OF OUR CURRENT POLICY OBJECTIVES. ELIOT UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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